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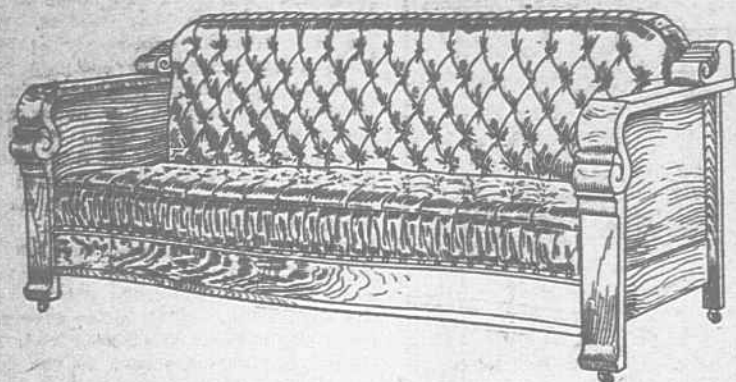
221 S. 3d St.

"We Sell Cheap
and Sell a Heap"



GO-CART

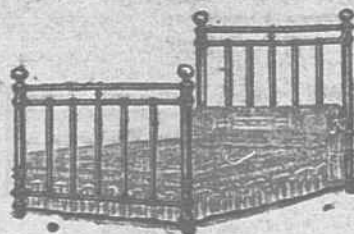
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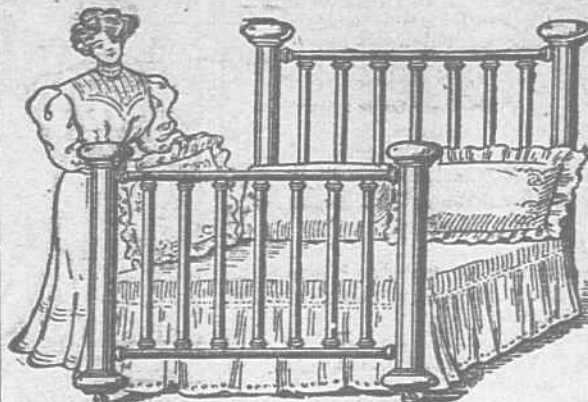
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(Continued from Saturday.)

Oh, heaven, heaven! What frenzy, what delirium of fury, was this for me! With insensate struggles I tried again to get at the demon until the Indian struck me a blow upon the head that dazed me.

But Miss Grayman-avenged herself not as she should have been avenged, but like an insulted and infuriated and desperate woman. She sprang to Payton's side and with all her force smote him upon the mouth. Even in the darkness she could see the wild flash that shot into his eyes, but if he raised his hand it was instantly lowered again, and he did not touch her.

Twice again, with all her woman's strength, she struck him full in the face. Then, like a woman, too, she staggered and fell in a swoon.

CHAPTER XIX.

ESCAPE FROM A TERRIBLE DEATH.

THE dramatic episode which ended with the fainting of Miss Grayman of course caused a halt. I inwardly raged at not being able to go to her assistance and equally at seeing Payton kneel at her side, opening my lamp and throwing its light upon her colorless face.

He took a flask from his pocket and pressed it to her lips. In a few minutes she opened her eyes and stared around. Then her look fell upon me, and she smiled.

How my heart bounded! And again I struggled vainly to reach her, but she put up her hand, smiling once more, and motioned me to be quiet. Love her! Heaven knows how I loved her!

"I could die happy," I thought, "if only I could rescue her from that devil."

Then for the first time the absence of the mild Susan and of the third man impressed itself upon my mind.

As to the man I hoped that, after all, I had killed him, but the fact that Susan had been left behind gave me a gleam of hope. If only our friends could find her she might be of invaluable aid in putting them quickly on the right track.

How I did pray that they had come and that they would follow us.

In five minutes, perhaps, Miss Grayman had fully recovered, and Payton immediately directed an advance. I noticed that Payton always chose the driest ground, and the most open places in the brush in order evidently to leave as few indications as possible of a trail and occasionally the Indian stopped and carefully rejoined branches that had been broken or brushed aside.

This gave me the idea of struggling whenever I had the strength in order to leave indelible marks of our passage. But I had not long essayed these tactics before the Indian gave me another blow upon the head with the butt of my own pistol, which left me senseless.

It must have been a considerable time that I hung limp in the hands of

my bearers. When at last I opened my eyes and stared about I was lying on the ground.

There was a light from my lamp, which Payton held in his hand, directing its rays upon the ground a short distance away. Beside me on the moist ground knelt Miss Grayman, tears shining on her cheeks, while her hand rested, as in benediction, upon my brow.

I could see that her lips were moving silently. Opposite to her in the shadow appeared the motionless form of the Indian, guarding us.

As my eyes opened she gave a little cry, and, leaning over, pressed her lips to my forehead. I struggled to raise my head and to touch her with my bound hands. She gently stroked my face and then burst into uncontrollable weeping.

The Indian looked at her with indifference, and Payton paid no attention. Then I noticed the sound of digging in wet, sticky soil. I twisted my head toward the spot where the full illumination of the lamp fell and saw the man who had helped the Indian to carry me turning up the dripping mud with a broad sabrelike bayonet. The terrible truth burst upon me.

They were going to bury me in the swamp!

In the awful flood of emotions that rolled over me one thought, one restless longing, rode upon the surface. I turned my face toward Miss Grayman and spoke her name.

Instantly she tried to dry her tears and to suppress her sobs. Our eyes met, and, reading the wish that was in my heart, she put her face close to mine. "John, dear John," she faltered with infinite tenderness.

Then our lips met.

God! What a betrothal!

Immediately she fell to sobbing again, but the soft pressure of her hand remained upon my forehead and comforted me even in that dreadful moment.

Presently Payton, still holding the light for the gravedigger, spoke impatiently.

"Hurry up," he said. "You are too slow. We must cover the dog and be off."

The man redoubled his efforts, and the glary clay squeaked and sucked as his bayonet tore it up.

In a few minutes Payton spoke again: "That'll do. Now, throw him in."

The man approached me, and the Indian rose from his knees.

"Why, he's come to!" the man exclaimed.

"No matter," said Payton. "Do as I tell you."

Both stooped to lift me. But before they could raise me from the ground Helen had thrown herself at Payton's feet.

"God in heaven!" she cried. "Commodore Brown, can you do such a thing? They say that you are Alfonso Payton, the pirate, and that you have no mercy. But I know, for you have proved it to me, that you have the instincts and education of a gentleman. Whatever your crimes may have been it is impossible that you should do this! It is too abominable, unspeakable, unchristian!"

For a moment weakness overcame her, and she sobbed, bending down over her knees. Then, flinging off her tears, she seized his hand. "If money will save him," she cried, "you shall have it! I swear to you that I will implore, I will compel, my father, to give you any sum you may name. He

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all listen to me; he never refused me. Only let him go. Leave him here in the wilderness if you will, and I promise to remain your prisoner until the ransom is paid."

There was such tremendous passion and eloquence in the girl's voice and words that my heart swelled ready to burst. Even the Indian seemed moved, and the white man brushed his rough cheeks with his hand.

I thought that Payton could not resist, but it was rather for her than for myself that I wished him to yield. He did seem to hesitate—perhaps he was calculating the chances that her father would listen to her appeal and weighing them against the chances that I, if released, would yet run him down before he could secure the money.

(To be continued.)

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